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May 16, 1960

Mr. William F. Knowland
Assistant Publisher
Oakland Tribune
Oakland, California

Dear Bill:

Many thanks for your note and the enclosed editorial. At some time when we can get together, I should like to give you further background on the plane incident, and I believe we can put to rest your doubt on one or two points that you raise. On the whole, I found your editorial sound and constructive.

Faithfully yours,

(Signed) ALLEN W. DULLES

Allen W. Dulles
Director

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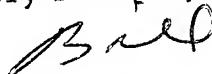
OFFICE OF
WILLIAM F. KNOWLAND
ASSISTANT PUBLISHER

May 10, 1960

Dear Allen:

Enclosed is copy of an
editorial which appeared in today's
Tribune.

Very sincerely,



Mr. Allen Dulles
Central Intelligence Agency
Washington, D. C.

U.S. Handling of Plane Incident Inept in Making Foolish Admissions

The United States position of strength is not affected by the shooting down of an unarmed reconnaissance plane but the fact remains that the State Department has foolishly and needlessly admitted that Soviet Premier Khrushchev was right in his charge that the U.S. plane was on a spy mission.

This was a gratuitous windfall for Khrushchev in his bid for the sympathies of the uncommitted world. Even so, we can see little justification for the sanctimonious lectures delivered by British editorial writers who should be aware of their own intelligence activities as well as the delinquencies of the security system in that country.

It was foolish to have invited this incident on the eve of the Summit Conference.

On the other hand, it could have been fatal to the free world not to devise sources of information on Soviet military power and intentions.

The fact a nation negotiates is no assurance of peaceful intentions. Remember the Japanese negotiators Kurusu and Nomura in Washington on the morning of Pearl Harbor Dec. 7, 1941?

The simple fact is that the Russians spy and we spy. This is a regular routine. This particular plane should not have been over Soviet territory. That was a mistake or an

accident. But there still is no justification for shooting it down, nor for Khrushchev's bellicose bluster and threats. If anything has damaged the hopes for a successful Summit Conference it was the way the Soviet Premier handled the incident.

It is absolutely essential that the United States use every possible legitimate means to study and analyze the massive military machine posed against the free world. That is the reason for the existence of the Central Intelligence Agency and the intelligence systems of every other nation in the West.

On the other hand, there is no reason for moralizing in Moscow. We have only to remember that a scientist by the name of Klaus Fuchs passed information about the atomic bomb to Russia in 1943. Then there was the case of Alger Hiss and his cohorts. Since then there have been Julius and Ethel Rosenberg, Colonel Able, Jack Soble, Mark Zboroski, and Morton Sobell. They were all Soviet spies who transmitted valuable and secret military information to Moscow. So there is no basis for a high moral tone from any Russian official.

None of this, however, excuses the State Department for gross and inept handling of the plane incident. Responsibility for a major error in judgment should be fixed and appropriate censure affixed.

"—IT FELL TO EARTH, I KNEW NOT WHERE"

